

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 08595 081147Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----065142 081202Z /41

O R 081045Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4048
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 8595

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE, IS, SY
SUBJECT: LEBANON: CONVERSATIONS WITH WEIZMAN

REF: (A) STATE 172470 (B) STATE 171142

1. WEIZMAN PHONED DCM THIS MORNING (JULY 8) SEEKING OUR
IMPRESSIONS OF SITUATION IN BEIRUT. HE SAID OVERNIGHT
INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INDICATED THINGS WERE FAIRLY
QUIET BUT THAT CHRISTIANS WERE EXPECTING ANOTHER CYCLE
OF ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT TO COMMENCE AT LUNCH-TIME TODAY.
FROM TONE AND CONTENT OF THEIR MESSAGES HE HAD IMPRESSION
SOME OF CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP WAS VERY NERVOUS
AND WORRIED. HE SAID THEY WERE "ASKING FOR ALL KINDS OF
HELP WHICH I DON'T WANT TO GIVE THEM." FINALLY, HE

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NOTED THAT ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE HAD OBSERVED NO
SIGNIFICANT NEW SYRIAN DEPLOYMENTS IN PAST 12 HOURS
WITH EXCEPTION OF SEVERAL UNITS
OF HEAVY ARTILLERY IN BEIRUT AREA.

2. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF REFTELS DCM CALLED WEIZMAN AT HOME
TO REVIEW ADDITIONAL STEPS US AND OTHERS HAVE

TAKEN TO DEFUSE SITUATION. WHEN INFORMED IT WAS OUR IMPRESSION THAT SOME CHRISTIAN LEADERS WERE FEELING COCKY AS A RESULT OF ISRAELI OVERFLIGHTS AND STATEMENTS, WEIZMAN INTERRUPTED TO SAY HE HAD GAINED THE SAME IMPRESSION. HE SAID HE HAD ALREADY GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS EARLY THIS MORNING TO SEND A STRONG MESSAGE TO CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP "TO CLIMB OFF IT" AND TO AVOID FURTHER PROVOCATION OF ADF. AS A RESULT OF OUR CONVERSATION HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY "BOOST UP MY INSTRUCTION AND DE-COCKIFY THOSE SONSOFBITCHES."

3. REMAINDER OF CONVERSATION FOCUSED ON DANGERS OF MISCALCULATION AND NEED FOR RESTRAINT BY ALL PARTIES. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION WHETHER ISRAELIS HAD ANYONE IN BEIRUT AT PRESENT TO WHOM RIGHTIST CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP WOULD LISTEN, WEIZMAN SAID NO. ONLY COMMUNICATION AT MOMENT IS VIA SECURE RADIO. DCM ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY PLANS TO MEET REPRESENTATIVES OF CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP OUTSIDE OF LEBANON IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. WEIZMAN RESPONDED THAT THIS COULD BE ARRANGED VERY QUICKLY. MAYBE THE TIME WAS RIPE, HE SAID, "TO SQUARE AWAY SOME OF THOSE BLOCKHEADS FACE-TO-FACE."

4. COMMENT: FOR ALL OF WEIZMAN'S HUFFING AND PUFFING WE HAVE STRONG IMPRESSION HE IS A STARK REALIST ON LIMITS OF ISRAELI ROOM FOR MANEUVER IN THIS CRISIS. HE IS VERY WORRIED ABOUT MAKING A MIS-STEP AND CLEARLY IS LOOKING TO (AND DEPENDING SECRET

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ON) U.S. INITIATIVE TO COOL THE SITUATION. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO KEEP HIM CLOSELY INFORMED OF BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS AND WHEN IT IS TO OUR ADVANTAGE, OF OUR ASSESSMENTS. (HE WAS VERY GRATEFUL, FOR EXAMPLE, FOR DESCRIPTION OF HOW SLEEPY AND QUIET DAMASCUS IS THIS WEEKEND). WEIZMAN FEELS VERY UNEASY, WE ARE CERTAIN, OVER HIS PRIMARY DEPENDENCE ON INTELLIGENCE FROM ISRAEL'S FRIENDS IN EAST BEIRUT. HE NEEDS A GOOD BIT OF HANDHOLDING DURING THIS PERIOD, AND THE MORE WE CAN DO THE BETTER CHANCE WE HAVE OF RESTRAINING THE ISRAELIS FROM SOME FOOLHARDY ADVENTURE. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV08595
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780280-0927
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780782/aaaacrax.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 019ae378-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 172470, 78 STATE 171142
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2076934
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANON: CONVERSATIONS WITH WEIZMAN
TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE, IS, SY, (WEIZMEN, EZER), (LEWIS, SAMUEL W)
To: STATE BEIRUT
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/019ae378-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014